191 during the Russian oppression at the beginning
871 of the century, but as both the students and the teachers (being Finns) were opposed to it, hardly any results were achieved despite a six-hours-a-week intensive study program. Between the two world wars Russian was taught only as a voluntary subject in some of the boys' schools. After World War II it was established as the first foreign language in a dozen or so secondary schools throughout the country. It is strange, too, that very few Finnish young people choose to study Russian in the university, although the University of Helsinki possesses the best facilities for it outside the Soviet Union.

•197 The Finnish language, which in addition to the Finns in Finland is spoken by Finns living in adjoining areas in Scandinavia and the

197 Soviet Union as well as by Finnish emigrants to North America, is strikingly different from most of the idioms of the neighboring peoples. Among these its only close relative is Estonian, and even these two languages are not mutually understandable. After modern linguistic investigation was established, further relatives for Finnish were discovered in Hungarian, Lappish and several split languages in Central and Eastern Russia. Finnish is a descendant of Proto-Finnic, the speech of the ancestors of
192 the present Balto-Finnic tribes. During the centuries Finnish has received a great number of loan words of Baltic, Germanic and Slavic origin; the number of specifically Nordic borrowed words is understandably very large. Many of these have been preserved in Finnish

193 In morphology Finnish makes great use of different case endings and of dervation suffixes which can be affixed one after another to express different notions and modifications. Consequently, Finnish words are generally longer than English ones--but, on the other hand, the same idea can almost always be expressed in fewer
192 words in Finnish. The vocabulary is abundant, containing an especially large number of descriptive words associated with various natural phenomena.

191 Finnish was first established as a literary
● 197 language towards the middle of the sixteenth century by the reformer of Finland, Bishop Michael Agricola, who based the standard language on the western dialects which were spoken in the most developed section of

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197 the country. In the following centuries Finnish was mostly used in religious books and some instructional pamphlets. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century the appearance of Kalevala, which was collected among the Karelians, at once drew attention toward the eastern dialects. They were idealized as representing an "unspoiled" Finish idiom uncorrupted by Swedish, and there was a strong movement for establishing a new literary language based on the eastern Finnish speech. This "Battle of the Dialects" was brought to a compromise by Elias Lönnrot, the collector of Kalevala, so that the western dialects remained as the basis for the literary language, but it was greatly enriched by words, phrases and idioms adapted from eastern dialects.

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Since then, great attention has been dedicated to the care of the Finnish language, which today has an extraordinarily large literary use, considering the small number of speakers. A strong puristic tendency has been prevalent for the last hundred years, and numerous words and idioms of Swedish origin have been abandoned in favor of genuine Finnish ones. Modern Finnish is extremely "reluctant" in adapting material from any foreign language. When a new conception is introduced, the resources of the dialects are investigated for an appropriate name, or a new word is born as a result of word compounding or derivations. Such modern terms as radar or plastic, for instance, already have established Finnish names. As further examples may be mentioned the Finnish

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•197 words puhelin 'something to talk with' for telephone, lennätin 'something that makes to fly' for telegraph, veturi 'something that pulls' for locomotive and valokuva 'light picture' for photograph. On the other hand, post is still in Finnish posti, and for radio no good Finnish equivalent has been introduced, despite repeated efforts. The preference for native expressions has brought Finnish further apart from other Western languages, but it also has made scientific literature written in Finnish easily understandable even for uneducated people. This is no doubt one of the reasons why the Finnish-speaking population in Finland reads proportionally more books of scientific interest than the Swedish-speaking group.

Finnish is usually considered a difficult

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Finnish is usually considered a difficult
191 language to learn, but after the preliminary
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difficulties are overcome, it appears to be quite regular in its construction. To a speaker of a Germanic language like English, Finnish may at first sound odd but quite pleasing. Its abundant, fully articulated vowels and the absence of harsh gutteral sounds lend to it a musical, sonorous quality which is strangly reminiscent of Italian.

● 197 Spoken Finnish is divided into several dialects which seem to be rather far apart but which are mutually understandable. Usually the dialects are divided into a smaller but rather heterogeneous western group and a larger, more or less homgeneous eastern group, which changes into Kerlian without any sharp demarcation line at the eastern boundary. Actually, the reasons why Karelian is considered a different

197 language from Finnish are merely political, a result of historical and cultural developments. The most important sub-dialects in the western group are the southwestern dialect which comes near to Estonian and phonologically and morphologically shows more deviations from the other Finnish idioms than the Karelian language, and the Tavastian dialect, which probably comes next to standard Finnish. In addition to these geographical dialects, there exists a social dialect, a substandard form of speech spoken by the educated classes, although in more careless conversation even they usually prefer the local dialect. It is still unpredictable how the displacement of the Karelians is going to affect the dialect distribution, but the trend seems to be that while the older people among the evacuees stick to their old dialect, the

197 children have adopted the speech of their new environment. The Finnish spoken by emigrants abroad reflects the dialect of the localities whence they originally came. Thus, e.g., the American Finns mostly speak an Ostrobothnian dialect, as the majority of them had their homes in this province. The language used in Finnish publications in America is "grandfather's Finnish," a form of speech prevalent in Finland at the beginning of the century.

192 Common Finnish idioms and espressions

Hyvää päivää!	Good day, or How do you do? (Formal)
Päivää!	" " " (Less Formal)
(Hyvää) huomenta!	Good morning!
(Hyvää) iltaa!	Good evening!
Hyvää yötä!	Good night! (This greeting always contains both words.)

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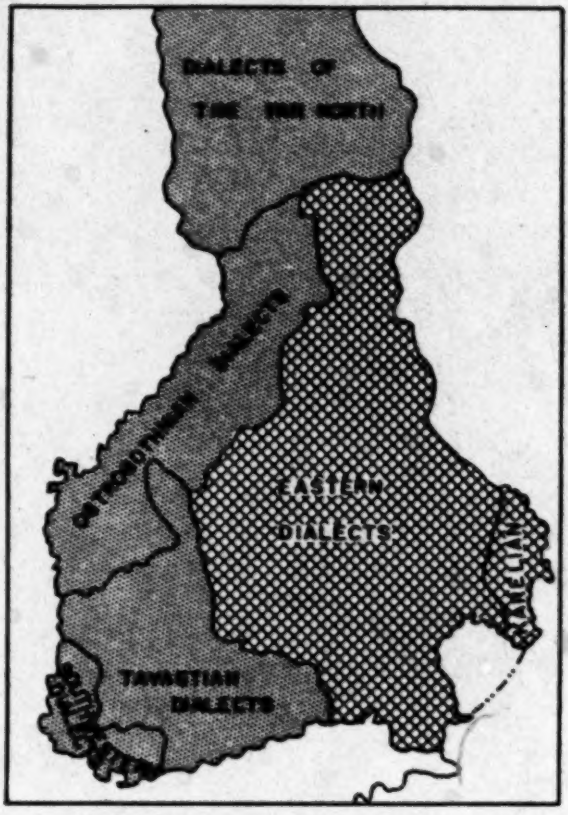
PRE-WAR DIALECT DISTRIBUTION IN FINLAND



WESTERN DIALECTS*

EASTERN DIALECTS

*DIALECTS OF THE FAR NORTH EXTEND TO THE NATIONAL BOUNDARY, INTERMIXED WITH LAPPISH